

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claim 10, and amend claims 1, 5, 8, 9, 11-14 and 16 as shown in the following list of claims. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A communication station adapted for contactless communication with transponders and with further communication stations, comprising:

[[a]] first protocol-executing means adapted to function according to station-transponder protocol, the first protocol-executing means being adapted to effect communication between the communication station and at least one transponder while observing the station-transponder protocol; ~~and~~

[[a]] second protocol-executing means adapted to function according to a station-station protocol that differs from the station-transponder protocol in respect of at least one protocol parameter, the second protocol-executing means being adapted to effect communication between the communication station and at least one further communication station while observing the station-station protocol;

first signal-processing means electrically connected to the first protocol-executing means, the first signal-processing means being adapted to code and decode signals for contactless station-transponder communication, the first signal-processing means being further adapted to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication;

second signal-processing means electrically connected to the second protocol-executing means, the second signal-processing means being adapted to code and decode signals for contactless station-station communication, the second signal-processing means being further adapted to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-station communication; and

transmission means electrically connected to the first and second signal-processing means to transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication and the signals for the contactless station-station

27 communication to and from the first and second signal-processing means, the
28 transmission means being adapted to receive and transmit electromagnetic signals
29 for contactless communication with the transponders and the further
30 communication systems.

1 2. (previously presented) A communication station as claimed in claim 1,
2 wherein the first protocol-executing means have energy-supply signal generating
3 means that are adapted to generate an energy-supply signal each time the handling
4 of the station-transponder protocol starts, and wherein the second protocol-
5 executing means have synchronizing-signal generating means that are adapted to
6 generate a synchronizing signal each time the handling of the station/station
7 protocol starts.

1 3. (previously presented) A communication station as claimed in claim 1,
2 wherein the station-station protocol is operative to cause a minimal energy
3 consumption at the communication station when communicating with the at least
4 one further communication station.

1 4. (previously presented) A communication station as claimed in claim 1,
2 wherein the first protocol-executing means are adapted to function according to
3 the station-transponder protocol that is adapted to communicate with a plurality of
4 transponders, and wherein the second protocol-executing means are adapted to
5 establish a communication connection to a plurality of communication stations.

1 5. (currently amended) An integrated circuit for a communication station for
2 contactless communication with transponders and with further communication
3 stations, comprising:

4 [[a]] first protocol-executing means adapted to function according to a
5 station-transponder protocol, the first protocol-executing means being adapted to
6 effect communication between the communication station and at least one
7 transponder while observing the station-transponder protocol; ~~and~~

8 [[a]] second protocol-executing means adapted to function according to a
9 station-station protocol that differs from the station-transponder protocol in

respect of at least one protocol parameter, the second protocol-executing means being adapted to effect communication between the communication station and at least one further communication station while observing the station-station protocol;

first signal-processing means electrically connected to the first protocol-executing means, the first signal-processing means being adapted to code and decode signals for contactless station-transponder communication, the first signal-processing means being further adapted to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication;

second signal-processing means electrically connected to the second protocol-executing means, the second signal-processing means being adapted to code and decode signals for contactless station-station communication, the second signal-processing means being further adapted to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-station communication; and

a terminal electrically connected to the first and second signal-processing means to transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication and the signals for the contactless station-station communication to and from the first and second signal-processing means, the terminal being adapted to be connected to transmission means for contactless communication with the transponders and the further communication systems.

6. (previously presented) An integrated circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein the first protocol-executing means have energy-supply signal generating means adapted to generate an energy-supply signal each time the station-transponder protocol starts, and wherein the second protocol-executing means have synchronizing-signal generating means that are adapted to generate a synchronizing signal each time the handling of the station-station protocol starts.

7. (previously presented) An integrated circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein the station-station protocol is adapted to minimize energy consumption at the communication station when communicating with the at least one further communication station.

1 8. (currently amended) An integrated circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein
2 the first protocol-executing means are operative to function according to the
3 station-transponder protocol, which is adaptive to communicate with a plurality of
4 transponders, and wherein the second protocol-executing means are adapted
5 ~~arranged~~ to establish a communication connection to a plurality of communication
6 stations.

1 9. (currently amended) A communication system adapted for contactless
2 communication, comprising:
3 a plurality of transponders;
4 a plurality of communication stations, each comprising:
5 a microprocessor adapted to execute a station-transponder protocol
6 for contactless station-transponder communication with at least one of the
7 transponders and a station-station protocol for contactless station-station
8 communication with at least one of the communication stations, wherein the
9 station-station protocol ~~which~~ differs from the station-transponder protocol by at
10 least one protocol parameter, ~~wherein each communication station is adapted to~~
11 ~~communicate with at least one other communication station~~ the microprocessor
12 being further adapted to code and decode signals for the contactless station-
13 transponder communication and to code and decode signals for the contactless
14 station-station communication, the microprocessor being further adapted to
15 modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless transponder
16 communication and to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless
17 station communication; and
18 transmission means electrically connected to the microprocessor to
19 transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder
20 communication and the signals for the contactless station-station communication
21 to and from the microprocessor, the transmission means being adapted to receive
22 and transmit electromagnetic signals for contactless communication with the
23 transponders and the communication systems.

1 10. (canceled).

1 11. (currently amended) A communication system as claimed in claim 9 ~~10~~,
2 wherein each of the transponder is an RF tag.

1 12. (currently amended) A communication system as claimed in claim 9 ~~10~~,
2 wherein the microprocessor is adapted to generate an energy-supply signal.

1 13. (currently amended) A communication system as claimed in claim 9 ~~10~~,
2 wherein the microprocessor is adapted to generate a synchronizing signal.

1 14. (currently amended) A communication station adapted to communicate
2 with a plurality of transponders, comprising:
3 a microprocessor adapted to execute a station-transponder protocol for
4 contactless station-transponder communication with at least one of the
5 transponders and a station-station protocol for contactless station-station
6 communication with other communication stations, wherein the station-station
7 protocol ~~which~~ differs from the station-transponder protocol by at least one
8 protocol parameter, ~~wherein the communication station is adapted to communicate~~
9 ~~with at least one other communication station~~ the microprocessor being further
10 adapted to code and decode signals for the contactless station-transponder
11 communication and to code and decode signals for the contactless station-station
12 communication, the microprocessor being further adapted to modulate and
13 demodulate the signals for the contactless transponder communication and to
14 modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station communication;
15 and
16 transmission means electrically connected to the microprocessor to
17 transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder
18 communication and the signals for the contactless station-station communication
19 to and from the microprocessor, the transmission means being adapted to receive
20 and transmit electromagnetic signals for contactless communication with the
21 transponders and the other communication systems.

1 15. (previously presented) A communication station as claimed in claim 14,
2 wherein each of the transponders is an RF tag.

1 16. (currently amended) A communication station as claimed in claim 14,
2 wherein the microprocessor is adapted to generate an energy-supply signal.

1 17. (previously presented) A communication system as claimed in claim 14,
2 wherein the microprocessor is adapted to generate a synchronizing signal.